DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 327 029 EC 232 679

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TITLE A Case Study on Special Education in New Zealand.
SPONS AGENCY United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, Paris (France).
REPORT NO ED.88/WS/18
PUB DATE 88
NOTE 36p.; Organizational chart on page 28 may not reproduce well due to small, broken print.
AVAILABLE FROM United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, 7 place de Fontenoy, 75007 Paris, France.
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS Case Studies; *Delivery Systems; *Disabilities; Educational Administration; Educational Finance; Educational Legislation; *Educational Policy; *Educational Practices; Educational Research; Elementary Secondary Education; Foreign Countries; Parent Participation; Postsecondary Education; Preschool Education; *Special Education; Voluntary Agencies
IDENTIFIERS *New Zealand

ABSTRACT

As part of a Unesco study of its member states, this case study reviews New Zealand's services for the education of disabled persons. The policy objective in special education in New Zealand is to ensure that provision is made for the education of all persons with special teaching needs within a program which is universal, integral with other education programs, life-long, and unified within and across age sectors and community settings. The major trend in special education is towards the inclusion of all students with special teaching needs into the mainstream of education. The case study covers special education policy, legislation, administration and organization, special education provisions, finance, research and development, voluntary organizations, parents, and issues. Appendices offer an organization chart of special education in New Zealand and clarification of nomenclature used. (JDD)

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A Case Study on Special Education

in

NEW ZEALAND

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A Case Study on Special Education
in
NEW ZEALAND

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Preface

With a view to updating information on the present situation of special education in Member States in 1986-1987, Unesco undertook a review of the legislation, administration and financing of facilities and services for the education of disabled persons.

The information was collected in two ways.

First, sixty countries from the different regions of the world completed a questionnaire; their replies were reproduced and analysed, and can be found in a Unesco document: *A Review of the Present Situation of Special Education*. Second, twelve countries prepared each a case study which further elaborates and complements information contained in the questionnaire. These have been reproduced individually.

While the compiled information provides an indication of progress made since the first study published by Unesco in 1971, *A Study of the Present Situation of Special Education*, it is also intended to provide a data base from which future programmes could grow. Thus the information will be of assistance to policy-makers, planners, administrators and specialists in special education and will hopefully foster the exchange of experiences and lead to increased education provision for disabled persons.

The case studies, prepared under contract with Unesco, should be considered as information documents requiring continual revision and updating. A list of the countries which contributed case studies, as well as those which replied to the questionnaire appear on the preceding page.

The views expressed in this study are those of the individuals concerned with its preparation and do not necessarily reflect those of Unesco.

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SECTION I. SPECIAL EDUCATION POLICY[1]

The policy objective in special education in New Zealand is to ensure that provision is made for the education of all persons with special teaching needs, including those who are disabled, within a programme which will be universal, integral with other education programmes, life-long and unified within and across age sectors and community settings. It is intended that special education should be based upon each individual's identified learning needs and skills. There is no provision in the education legislation for categorial provision, and those categories which are provided for administrative purposes will be gradually eliminated as alternative procedures and resource provisions are brought into place. Finally, efforts are now being made to establish procedures which will ensure that special education can be seen to be both effective and accountable.

The major trend in special education in New Zealand is towards the inclusion of all students with special teaching needs into the mainstream of education. By international standards considerable progress has been made towards this goal. Among other things it would mean that all students would come within the administrative and professional management of the regular school system. However, a continuum of resources would be maintained which would provide support for teachers and students with special teaching needs in regular classrooms, classes and units for students who required some degree of withdrawal during the school day and a limited provision of residential education.

It is proposed that there should be a gradual transition away from the allocation of resources by categories of handicap to a situation where educational assessment and the needs of individual students are the primary focus of attention. This would require a shift of emphasis towards the allocation of resources to individual students rather than categories. It would mean, for example, that teachers who are now restricted to working only with one category of student, would be able to work with the most needy educationally handicapped students in the facility or group of facilities serviced by them. This new educational emphasis would be towards positive educational planning rather than concern for causative factors, towards programme planning rather than labelling. This would

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1. In compiling this case study the assumption is made that it will be read in conjunction with the questionnaire prepared by the same author.

necessarily involve parents more closely in assessment, and remove assessment from the realm of the outside expert, locating it more firmly in the continuous, educationally based evaluation of each student's progress. It would ensure a more optimistic outcome-oriented approach, and it would bring parent, teacher and specialist together to assess, plan and evaluate progress.

The process would require a determination to see special education as a support service to students, teachers, tutors and parents and not as a separate system with its own facilities. In a sense the intention would be to mainstream special education rather than to mainstream students with special teaching needs. Special education would then assume the role of a support service to regular education although many students would still receive assistance in classes or units, and a few, in residential schools, from teachers with specialist training.

The need for public education to ensure that policy developments are enacted within a community context of acceptance and positive, confident support is clearly important.

A recent survey shows that there is a degree of teacher uncertainty and even anxiety over dealing with some students who have special teaching needs. In a joint study conducted by the Department of Education and the New Zealand Educational Institute, it was established that teachers in primary and intermediate schools were particularly concerned about their capacity to manage students with behavioural difficulties or those who are intellectually handicapped. There is no reason to believe that this same degree of uncertainty does not exist among teachers in secondary schools. However, the enthusiasm with which tutors at technical institutes have begun programmes for intellectually handicapped students and the general acceptability of students with special teaching needs in pre-school educational settings suggests that these sectors may, for a variety of reasons, show fewer concerns than their colleagues in the primary area.

Teacher organizations have felt it necessary to point out the need for additional resources to be made available as a pre-condition for further developments in special education. While it is true that no additional students are being introduced to the school sectors where compulsory education is required, teacher organizations have not accepted that re-organization and re-deployment of existing resources is sufficient. The

teacher organizations are reluctant to see new programmes developed until the Government is able to provide additional resources for them. The distinction that might be drawn between re-organization and improved programmes will be a subject of continuing debate.

It could be argued that teacher organizations, while supporting mainstreaming in principle, may be less willing to accept the potential benefits than are academics, most administrators and the voluntary organizations. This tension between those who must carry out new policies and those who propose and support them, is one that is well recognized across all education systems and will almost certainly be resolved through the normal process of discussion, the use of exemplary programmes, and the provision of suitable support for teaching staff.

Parents of students with special teaching needs are increasingly determined to achieve equity for their children. New parent groups have been established either as subsidiary groups from the well-established voluntary organizations or as separate groups and even coalitions of groups of parents. These new organizations have been particularly active in promoting the interests of their children.

The approach to new policy developments is not entirely consistent among parent groups. As a general rule, the more established groups favour the broad policy developments outlined above. Some newly established groups, advocating marginal diagnostic categories (e.g. autism) or selective categories (e.g. dyslexia) would prefer to see a reversal of these trends towards categorial, segregated education in order to establish a resource base for the group of children they represent. Outside of these groups there is very little support for such a reversal of policy, though some deaf persons consider that all severely and profoundly hearing handicapped students should have an opportunity during their schooling to experience living in a supportive deaf community. They argue that the existing two state day/residential schools for hearing-impaired students should offer this service.

Community attitudes to mainstreaming are mixed, depending on involvement with special interest groups and understanding of the continuum of provisions proposed by the Department of Education. Where parent groups in regular schools, for example school committees and home school associations, have had positive experiences of children with special teaching

needs enrolled in their schools, a generally supportive attitude will be found. However, the view that mainstreaming may be synonomous with de-institutionalization of psychiatric patients has produced some negative feeling, though this does not appear to be the predominant viewpoint.

Across the broad spectrum of education in New Zealand there is a growing willingness to involve the community in educational matters. The 1986 Curriculum Review (a review of the curriculum for primary and secondary schools) proposed a significant level of community participation in educational policy development and curriculum planning. These trends are consistent with what is now a firmly established policy within the Department of Education designed to involve parents in all its planning and development activities with respect to special education.

Policies on assessment in special education are changing for a number of reasons. In the past, assessment has been linked to the placement of students in categories. Closer scrutiny and an increasing understanding of the fact that many tests lack predictive value has led to a significant reduction in their use by psychologists. Of particular interest in New Zealand is a growing awareness of the cultural bias that is inherent in much of the testing which has been virtually standard practice in the last half century.

Assessment has therefore become an exercise in problem solving rather than a search for pathology. Whether the tests used are normative or criterion-referenced, their purpose is to lay the foundation for programme development and to serve as a baseline for programme evaluation.

These developments are sometimes ahead of teaching practice. In New Zealand there is a well established and most successful practice in the junior schools of reading assessment closely linked to the continuous process of the teaching of reading. This advanced practice is not so well established in most other areas of education. As a consequence a needs-based assessment is not always well understood and a certain tension will continue to exist between policy makers and practitioners while this more advanced form of assessment becomes more commonplace.

The strong demand from teacher organizations for a linkage between assessment and placement produces a further tension. Since placement in special education programmes in New Zealand must follow upon enrolment of a child in the regular school system, it is a legal issue as much as a

professional one. The development of more appropriate assessment procedures for the professional conduct of education does not necessarily satisfy a demand for assessments which will lead to segregated placements.

In a sense, these difficulties will only be resolved when the new policy of mainstreaming special education activities is fully established. Assessment will then take its place as a means of establishing appropriate programming rather than a pre-requisite to the removal of a child from the mainstream to a segregated special education setting.

Underpinning these developments is the normalization movement. While this movement is basically a human rights issue, its impact upon education is significant. The educational vehicle for the normalization process is seen in New Zealand to be mainstreaming. At the same time that the normalization issue has become such a powerful force in our community, the technology and practice of education have developed to a point where the education of students with special teaching needs can be much more effectively pursued. It could be said that, to some degree at least, special education in New Zealand (as elsewhere) has at times assumed a certain paternalism, an agreement to offer care, nurture and an element of instruction of a less rigorous kind than that offered to other students. This is less the case than it used to be and will increasingly be seen as an exception rather than the rule. The old categories of 'educable' and 'trainable' are no longer used. What is more, there is an increasing awareness that education is not a process which must be restricted to schools. Normalization requires education to play its part in a total community interest in all its members effected through all its institutions.

The trend towards educational auditing of effectiveness is at least as obvious in special education in New Zealand as it is in other areas of education. In some cases, support units conduct programme progress reviews on a weekly basis through rigorous evaluation criteria.

SECTION II. LEGISLATION

Legislation in New Zealand is enabling rather than mandating. The Education Act (1964) and its amendments are the legislative basis upon which all education in New Zealand is carried out with the exception of certain but not all educational programmes for visually handicapped students

which are effected under the Royal New Zealand Foundation for the Blind Act (1963). The questionnaire details the sections of the Act and the regulations which cover special education.

As noted in the questionnaire, existing legislation does not cover the needs of all children and young persons who are handicapped. However, amendments presently before Parliament will complete coverage by including within the provisions of the Act those students who are severely or profoundly handicapped and whose education is at present the responsibility of their parents. It should nonetheless be noted that for some years the Department of Education has been assisting the voluntary agencies which make educational provision for these students through their own programmes.

Since existing legislation enables the Minister of Education to assume responsibility for the education of all students in New Zealand, the Government has approved a policy which has begun to incorporate the remaining few children not already within the existing school system in schools, in advance of the amending legislation.

A more far-reaching consolidation of the Education Act is proposed. This consolidation will continue to make provision for special education but will recongize the developing policy decisions which are producing rapid changes in special education in New Zealand.

A great deal of new legislation has been enacted to ensure that children with special needs are better dealt with. These include amendments to the Children's and Young Person's Act to further protect children and to prevent child abuse or neglect. Legislation in the area of disabled persons ensures greater equity of treatment while amendments to the Education Act have included all early childhood education within the domain of the education service.

Many parents and professionals view the existing legislation as inadequate but the amendments before Parliament will meet most of these concerns. Because of the enabling nature of our legislation, many parents and at least one special interest group have sought to have specific legislation enacted along the lines of the United States Public Law 94-142. The majority viewpoint, however, holds that this kind of legislation is not appropriate in the New Zealand setting. There is nonetheless a strong feeling that resource provisions for students with special teaching needs

should be obvious and their existence jealously guarded. To some degree this conflicts with the process of normalization and leads to a degree of ambiguity for some parents and their organizations.

There is a conflict between the continuing pressure for additional resources attached to administrative categorial groupings, the means by which resources are currently allocated, and the wish to see a largely non-categorial approach towards children at school level.

It is unlikely that this tension will be eliminated until it is clear to all parties that adequate provision will be made for students with special teaching needs without recourse to categorial groupings or labelling where these are unnecessary.

SECTION III. ADMINISTRATION AND ORGANIZATION

To some degree, comment has been made on this area in previous sections. The questionnaire also deals rather fully with the subject. Appendix I shows the existing structure for administering education in New Zealand.

Provision is made for citizens who are handicapped or have special needs through the ministries of Education, Health, Labour and Social Welfare. Each of these ministries carries out the internationally recognized functions that their titles represent.

Where necessary, inter-departmental officials' committees come together for a particular purpose. These may include the departments already mentioned but also, for example, the Department of Internal Affairs and the Police Department. The committees are able to report to Cabinet or committees of Cabinet on matters of serious concern, for example drug or solvent abuse.

In addition to the work of officials' committees, the three departments listed in its title maintain a standing committee. This is the Health, Education, Welfare Committee which meets six times each year and is chaired by the Assistant Director-General of Education. This committee is able to maintain a consistent and continuing overview of developments which have to do with citizens who are handicapped as well as other matters. The HEW Committee is the major co-ordinating committee for the three departments.

Besides these committees of officials, the Government has established a number of quasi-governmental agencies which report to an individual minister or to Parliament. The major committee which deals with handicapped persons is the National Advisory Committee on the Community Welfare of Disabled Persons. This committee reports to the Minister of Social Welfare and the Department of Education has a permanent representative on it.

Because the special education services are not a discrete section of the Department of Education, all four of its assistant secretaries contribute to their administration. The Assistant Secretary (Schools and Development) has primary responsibility through the Director, Special Education, for overseeing special education in New Zealand. The Assistant Secretary (Tertiary) has increasing responsibility for special education at that level and for all teacher education; the Assistant Secretary (Administration) for all teachers' conditions of service; and the Assistant Secretary (Policy and Resources) for building policies and financial provisions generally.

Quite apart from the Department, the ten elected education boards and other local controlling authorities have major administrative functions in respect of special education. They employ most of its teachers and provide their accommodation and many of their other physical resources within the policies prepared with the Department.

The administrative structure is essentially that established for the primary special education service in the 1950s with the secondary inspectorate included from about 1965.

Primary school committees and the individual controlling authorities (education boards for primary schools and intermediate schools and boards of governors for secondary schools), have direct impact in two ways on the development and quality of special education services for which they are responsible. The first is their contribution to the development and administration of policies either on particular matters or through wider studies such as the 1986 Curriculum Review and the Draft Review of Special Education to be published in April 1987. They may do so through organizations such as the Schools Committees Federation, the Secondary School Boards Association or the Education Boards Association.

The second way in which they exercise an influence relates to the nature and extent of their concern for the work of those services for

which they have some direct responsibility. Thus a kindergarten association, a primary school committee or a secondary school board can influence the quality of social integration for its handicapped students and their parents and families. It can also contribute to any community programmes relating to handicapped people and their education, and ensure that the special education services at their own school or institution receive the appropriate resources and grants.

The education boards which control all primary and intermediate education in New Zealand have wide administrative responsibilities in special education. They appoint staff; programme, plan, provide and maintain school buildings and furniture; provide teaching resources and organize school transport. Their decisions have important implications for the quality of the special education programmes concerned. Most of the boards have now established a standing committee on special education. These committees help the boards to become better informed, to monitor their own servicing functions, and consult more effectively with the Department and with special education personnel.

As a generalization, it would be fair to say that while special education is administratively integrated into the regular education services, there is a degree of parallel segregated organization for special education. This is an administrative rather than a legislative characteristic of education. Nonetheless, it tends to form a dualism which permits the parallel process of special education to continue and in the absence of the integrative influence of the psychological service, which is an advisory and guidance resource for all students with special teaching needs, could tend towards a degree of isolation for special education services.

Fortunately, New Zealand has always maintained a significant element of mainstreaming. This trend has resulted partly from the widespread demographic distribution of population in New Zealand, partly from a belief among teachers and parents that children who have some form of handicap should be kept within their regular community. Consequently, in the absence of any legislative determination of a separate parallel special education stream, there has always been a close association of regular education with special education provisions. This association is being increased as the Department moves forward with its policy to eliminate all separate special education resources except the few places in residential special schools.

For many years, the voluntary organizations have maintained a strong presence in special education in New Zealand. Organizations which support students who have visual impairment, hearing impairment, intellectual handicap or physical handicap have all made a significant contribution to the development of special education. Some elements of the education of the visually impaired are controlled by the Royal New Zealand Foundation for the Blind. Students who are hearing-impaired have always been supported by the Department of Education but the five voluntary organizations which support the hearing-impaired population in New Zealand have ensured that there is a continuing and significant provision for hearing-impaired students. The Intellectually Handicapped Children's Society have maintained their own separate provisions for those few students who are not already included in the education system, pre-school centres for young intellectually handicapped children and sheltered workshops for adults. The Crippled Children's Society have maintained kindergartens for physically handicapped children and have a strong presence in sheltered employment and rehabilitation institutions.

As provision has been made through the controlling authorities at the early childhood, primary and intermediate, secondary and tertiary levels for students who have some handicapping condition, the voluntary organizations have begun to play a lesser role and to shift from service provision to advocacy activities.

SECTION IV. SPECIAL EDUCATION PROVISION

Special education in New Zealand is provided for students who have a special teaching need, it being understood, however, that resources do not permit total provision. In almost all cases, students are referred by parents, teachers, social agencies and, in a few cases, by medical practitioners, social workers and public health authorities. Where sensory or physical handicaps are concerned, medical diagnosis is usually the initiating factor with educational advisers and psychologists making final decisions on placement recommendations. In all other cases, educational and psychological assessments are carried out by advisory or support staff and psychologists. Placements are authorized by district senior inspectors of primary or secondary schools, district officers of early childhood education

or the principals of tertiary institutions such as community colleges or polytechnics. All special education placements are carried out under the authority of the Director-General of Education.

Parents are involved in all placement procedures though at present they are not universally involved in assessment procedures. Since categories are used only for administrative purposes, assessments are not determined by categorial definition so much as by student need. However, at present many special education resources in New Zealand are based on categorial allocation of resources and, for this reason, many placements are made on that basis. This approach to special education is rapdily changing, so that in future the majority of placements will be made on the basis of the student's need for educational assistance in a non-categorial model. Placements for students with more serious hearing or visual impairment are likely to continue on the basis of their categorial definition for some time yet.

As noted earlier, a great many students with special teaching needs are assisted in the mainstream of special education. Thus, somewhere between 70 and 90 per cent of all identified physically handicapped students are educated in mainstream settings. The exact percentage is not known since it is not considered necessary to keep records in this way. There is also an increasing trend towards educating students who have maladaptive behaviour difficulties in the regular education stream with provision of support services for them and their teachers. Some exemplary programmes of special education service delivery can be found in this area.

The minority of intellectually handicapped students recognized as requiring special education and many slow learning students have tended to be educated in segregated or locationally or at best socially mainstreamed settings. There is an increasing trend towards applying the model already adopted for maladjusted students to slow learning students. As a consequence, support staff are now more frequently assisting them and their teachers in regular classes as they are gradually functionally mainstreamed. There will now be an increasing movement towards at least locational mainstreaming of moderately to severely intellectually handicapped students in regular education settings as their existing segregated special day schools for the intellectually handicapped are closed.

Most visually or hearing-impaired students are now educated in mainstream settings with support from itinerant specialist staff. The only students with sensory handicaps who are educated in separate settings are those who are placed in residential special schools and a small number in units for the deaf in regular schools which work mostly in isolation from the school's regular programme.

New Zealand has a very fine distance education programme which serves students in isolated areas. In more recent years students with special teaching needs have been assisted by special needs programmes which supplement or support classroom programmes. The Correspondence School has developed these programmes as part of the wide ranging provisions for special education.

There is no area of disability for which no provision exists in New Zealand. It would be true to say that there are insufficient resources to assist all students who have learning difficulties, particularly those who have had a significant difficulty in learning to read, write and calculate, but by world standards the provision made in New Zealand is of a particularly high order.

There is no separate curriculum for students with handicaps. Adaptations of the regular curriculum have been made in a number of areas and specific curriculum activities are available for students with visual and hearing impairment, including total communication for hearing-impaired students which includes the use of the Australasian sign system.

A programme known as Reading Recovery has been developed by Dame Marie Clay, Professor of Education at the University of Auckland, which serves as a model of curriculum adaptation for students with special teaching needs. This programme is designed to identify the slowest 10 per cent of all students on completion of their first year of primary education, in terms of their progress in learning to read. The programme offers an intensified one:one teaching programme aimed at accelerating their learning to the level of their class peers. They are selected solely on the basis of their reading behaviour so that no discrepancy model or other selection procedure is employed which would set aside any student who fell within the bottom 10 per cent of the class group. This programme is succeeding to a level in excess of 95 per cent with the selected group. Consideration

is being given to further studies which would extend this model of learning recovery teaching to other areas of the curriculum.

Since the curriculum in special education is adapted from the curriculum in regular education it is essential that it should be flexible and imaginative. Officers of the Department of Education, Curriculum Development Unit, work with officers in the Special Education Division and with their colleagues in the schools to develop curriculum guidelines for special education provision. In the last two years particular attention has been directed towards programmes which will offer more effective teaching for students with special needs. A considerable degree of autonomy rests with schools, advisers and psychologists in determining how best to adapt the curriculum to the needs of individual students or classes.

Since it is an objective of the Department of Education to ensure that special education is lifelong and integrated across the various sectors of education, particular attention is now being paid to programmes in the early childhood and tertiary levels.

The Department has laid a strong emphasis upon the development of early intervention programmes from birth to three years of age and is developing these programmes through its psychological service and advisers on handicapped children as rapidly as resources will permit. For some years special provision has been made in kindergartens and play centres for young children with special teaching needs through special units for small groups of selected students. At present consideration is being given to a move from locational and/or social to functional mainstreaming for these young students, with itinerant support being provided for the students and their teachers and parents. The Department has maintained a close liaison with pre-schools for intellectually handicapped and physically handicapped children run by the respective voluntary agencies. These agencies are now seeking to assist in this movement.

Development at the tertiary level is not well advanced. However, it is now a recognized priority and an increasing interest is being taken in classes and support programmes for handicapped students, particularly those who have an intellectual handicap. The number of programmes in community colleges and technical institutes doubled last year from approximately twenty to approximately forty programmes. It is expected that there will be a continuing expansion of these programmes. Again, the

likely limit on this development will be the provision on resources through Vote:Education. The support resources for students with special teaching needs both in the regular school and in special education facilities are provided through special education support services controlled by officers of the Department of Education and controlling authorities.

All the teachers employed in the special education services can be placed somewhere along a continuum which cuts across all age ranges of students. At one end are those who have a student-oriented role function and whose main task is teaching. At the other end are those who advise, supervise, consult and have a systems-centred role function. They may work with teachers, families, students, or other community services, but the final focus of their work is to contribute towards the quality of the education provided for individual students. Ranged between these two groups are those who have both teaching and support roles - speech-language therapists, resource teachers of reading, visual resource centre staff, and many others.

The relative size of this middle group is growing at the expense of the first as an increasing number of special class and special school primary sector teachers are providing itinerant teaching or resource services to students in regular classes and to their teachers. These itinerant teachers should provide good role models for their colleagues in regular classes in developing, implementing and evaluating teaching programmes for students with special teaching needs. The model appears to be equally well suited to the early childhood and secondary sectors.

The Department of Education provides educational services for Department of Social Welfare residential institutions and for hospital boards. The Department also provides assistance to the Justice Department prison service.

The well established professional and administrative divisions between the four sectors in the New Zealand state school system (early childhood, primary and intermediate, secondary, and tertiary) pose considerable difficulties in developing unified and effective special education support services. These somewhat artificial breaks mean that the controlling authorities for the sectors must operate in a flexible and co-operative fashion to ensure that special education support such as psychologists, speech-language therapists or advisers on the deaf, can operate easily and effectively across the divisions.

The psychological service of the Department of Education has moved from a fundamental concern with diagnosis and programming for individual children to a comprehensive special education consultative role. Pychologists now work with a very wide range of schools and agencies, and place a particular emphasis upon their work with parents. They are closely involved with teacher support and in-service training. In recent years, the role of the service has expanded to include both a systems analysis of education functions and a co-ordinating, supervisory role with a growing itinerant delivery of special education resources. The most firmly established programme in this area is a guidance unit model for maladjusted and slow learning students.

The orientation of the psychological service was originally towards the primary sector of education. Consequently psychologists have a long history of providing an assessment and advisory role to primary schools, including the intermediate schools which provide the final two years of primary education for all students from primary schools in a nominated area. At present the service remains administratively under the district senior inspectors of primary schools. Consideration is being given to the possibility of placing the service under regional control with equal access for all four sectors.

The pyschological service is now providing three related services:

(a) a continuation of the earlier model of diagnosis and advice which is offered across all sectors of education and to a wide range of other referral agencies, including parents.

(b) a consultative, co-worker relationship spread across all four sectors of the education service and offered also to a wide range of other agencies involved with children, including parents. In this role, as psychologists share, for example, skills of assessment and programme development, they may co-ordinate or take a direct role with those working closely with children. This role often involves leadership in in-service training, programme development and programme delivery. However, it has an educative function and leads to the objective of self-sufficiency of the co-worker.

(c) There is also a clinical role which places psychologists in a one:one relationship with clients, offering a service which is community wide

but concentrates upon children or the adults who work most closely with children - usually their parents.

While psychologists are not likely to play a managerial role beyond their own service, their contribution to a developing special education service must be significant.

The Department of Education will continue to expect the psychological service to maintain its work in all three of the related service functions noted above, and to place a greater emphasis upon the consultative role described here. In providing this service the expectation will be that psychologists would have a contribution to make across the broad spectrum of education and not just within one sector.

Other advisory groups are at present working with teachers and parents, and a number of teachers will be increasingly required to support colleagues as part of their itinerant role.

The co-ordination and supervision of these special education support services is becoming increasingly a matter of concern. These services have grown to meet ongoing and intermittently determined demands. It is proposed that there should be a re-organization of these services in the near future which will give them more appropriate lines of administration and management.

The provision of health services to schools is the joint responsibility of the Health Department and district hospital boards. The exception to this general rule is the employment of physiotherapists and occupational therapists by the Department of Education for both segregated and integrated schools or units for the physically handicapped. Where the Department employs its own health servicing personnel, adequate provision is available for these two services. However, owing to lack of resources most hospital boards are quite unable to meet the demand for physiotherapy or occupational therapy for students with special teaching needs in other educational settings.

To some extent this gap in resources can be met by community-based voluntary agencies. As a general rule, however, these agencies do not make ongoing provision for students in school settings. Some assistance is available for pre-school children and young people attending tertiary institutions. Recently, the Government has made provision for the distribution of financial assistance through the Department of Education to

tertiary institutions. This can be used in a discretionary way to support students with special teaching needs.

Pre-service teacher education in New Zealand does not differentiate between regular and special education. All pre-service training is based upon regular teaching programmes. Teachers entering special education services may be selected on the basis of skill and experience. Some teachers, but by no means all, are trained in postgraduate courses for the education of the handicapped.

It would be fair to say that few teachers' colleges have yet been able to develop programmes which offer adequate pre-service training in the teaching of students with special needs. In the last year, the Department has entered into a dialogue with the teachers' colleges through its special education and teacher education divisions. The purpose is to develop appropriate components for pre-service training in the education of students with special teaching needs. The emphasis upon training programmes that will emerge from these discussions will be upon the identification, assessment and educational planning for individual differences rather than upon any notions of categorial identification and compensatory programming. In this way it is hoped that in their pre-service training all teachers will develop their basic teaching skills so as to be able to extend those skills across a wider range of individual differences and avoid the labelling effect of categorial identifications. The Department will support teachers' colleges over the next year or two in the development of high quality pre-service training programmes in these areas.

Areas for in-service training are usually nominated by the Department of Education for a proportion of in-service training programmes. Local committees for the planning of in-service training determine subjects for the remainder of the available in-service training resources. The Department has recently given a high priority to in-service training that will assist students with special teaching needs and these programmes are being carefully audited to ensure that they provide an effective and a clear transfer to teaching practice.

The following specialist training programmes are available:

1. Psychologists. Psychologists must be trained teachers with successful teaching experience. They are required to undertake a six-year university

training programme in addition to their teacher training which includes a supervised internship for one full year.

- Diploma in Teaching
- Masters or Honours Degree in Educational Psychology
- Postgraduate Diploma in Educational Psychology.

2. Speech-language therapists.

- Trained Teacher Certificate (endorsed in Speech-Language Therapy)

Beginning in 1988, a four-year course will be introduced. No decision has been made on the final form this qualification will take but it could be titled B.Ed (Speech-language Therapy).

3. Adviser on deaf children.

- Trained Teacher's Certificate
- Teacher of Deaf Certificate (one-year course)
- Adviser of Deaf Certificate (one-year course)

4. Teacher of Deaf Children.

- Trained Teacher's Certificate
- Teacher of Deaf Certificate

The following is the list of courses in special education which are available but not mandatory. A Trained Teacher's Certificate is required to begin the course.

5. Teachers of the visually handicapped.

- Trained Teacher of the Visually Handicapped (one-year course).

6. *Teachers in generic special education* (classes and other positions in special education).

- Certificate in Education of the Handicapped (one-year course).

Finally, there are a number of training opportunities for teachers in special education. These include part-time courses through advanced studies for courses at teachers' colleges or the Advanced Studies for Teachers Unit courses offered through Palmerston North Teachers' College. Other courses are available through full- or part-time study at universities.

SECTION V. FINANCE[1]

Special education finances are an integral part of the state education system which is funded nationally. Funds are dispersed through the department's regional offices to local controlling authorities for their authorized expenditures. Parents and voluntary organizations contribute locally and nationally to provide additional equipment and the necessary funding for out-of-school activities.

Primary and secondary education are financed in essentially the same way. Some special education costs, for example the provision of adequate access for disabled persons to education buildings, are charged against the appropriate primary or secondary allocations. These also provide the wide range of teaching resources available for use by teachers of regular classes in their work with students who have learning difficulties. Funding is also made available through grants to the Royal New Zealand Foundation for the Blind and the Hearing Association of New Zealand. Details of all these allocations will be found in the questionnaire.

Early childhood education is funded by parent and voluntary organizations in association with the Government which has, over time, accepted an increasing financial responsibility in this sector as its educational importance has been better understood. The most recent change, in 1986, transferred responsibility for establishing and maintaining standards for premises, staffing and programmes for child care centres, and for providing staff training, from the Department of Social Welfare to the Department of Education.

The Department of Education meets the full cost of the special education services for infants and pre-school children discussed elsewhere.

The Government also meets, through the Department of Education, the greater part of the cost of tertiary education programmes. Students in tertiary education programmes are all required to pay some fees, which are greater for 'recreational' programmes than for those which are more specifically vocational. However, the Government meets by far the larger cost of this total activity. The programmes being developed to serve

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1. Reference should be made to the detailed statement provided in the questionnaire.

tertiary students who have special teaching needs are fully funded by the Government.

It is worth noting that at present some elements of funding are provided for the administratively determined categorial group. Thus, grants may be made on the basis of disability groupings such as intellectual handicap where disbursements are made to school committees in individual schools. For example, if a special class for slow learning students exists in a school, an additional allocation will be made for that class.

The Department is presently considering the viewpoint that allocation of funds to categorial models is not the most efficient means of ensuring that students with special teaching needs are best catered for. Funding directed to teaching programmes rather than categorial groupings may be a more effective way of targeting resources.

SECTION VI. RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

The Department considers that research in special education is essential. Some of the research which has been carried out in the last five years has been of outstanding quality. In some cases it has led to major developments in compensatory, remedial and special education programmes. For example, the Reading Recovery programme and the development of the guidance unit (a special education support programme) arose from research funded by the Department of Education. However, research has not always been well co-ordinated in special education and there is no particular mechanism for attracting research effort to identified needs. The Department of Education is now moving towards a funding policy for research which will lay greater emphasis upon its own initiatives rather than those of interested academics and others.

To some extent, deficiencies in respect of research derive from the unavailability of staff in the head office of the Special Education Division to develop formative research proposals. As a consequence there are gaps in the Department's knowledge which place it at a disadvantage when attempting to develop and implement more relevant programmes.

Nevertheless, as the questionnaire reply shows, a great deal of research is being conducted under the auspices of the Department of Education and through agencies funded, at least in part, by the

Department, particularly the New Zealand Council for Educational Research. This council is currently concluding a survey of special education in New Zealand, but its comments will be somewhat overtaken by the major special education review just completed by the Department. The review is to be released by the Minister of Education within the next few weeks as a draft discussion document.

The details of existing projects and proposals for future research which were included in the questionnaire will not be repeated here. However, it should be noted that the Department's interest lies very firmly in school-based research which has a direct application to the work of teachers and to the delivery of effective and efficient special education support services. In particular, the identification of learning strategies by students who have learning difficulties, the involvement of parents in assessment, planning and evaluation and school organization and management programmes which ensure the effective utilization of available resources are matters of particular interest at present.

The Department is seeking to encourage the more flexible use of resources and to find ways whereby it might assist schools and teachers to incorporate more students with special teaching needs in imaginative ways into the general activities and life of the school. Research into the school's contribution to the process of normalization will no doubt be a major feature of the special education research projects over the next five years.

SECTION VII. VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS

As noted earlier, the trend among voluntary organizations is to move away from service provision towards an advocacy role so far as early childhood and school age facilities are concerned. In the past the voluntary agencies, paarticularly the Intellectually Handicapped Children's Society, have shown that professionally competent and well organized educational services are an effective means of enhancing the educational and social potential of people with moderate, severe and profound handicaps. Over the past seventy years or so, the Department of Education has gradually included all of these groups in its own educational provisions so that now, with the exception of a very small group of severely and profoundly intellectually handicapped

school-age people, the Department either enrols all school-age children in its own facilities or, in the case of the Royal New Zealand Foundation for the Blind, funds educational programmes which meet the standards set by the Department. By 1990 all school-age children regardless of their disability will be incorporated into the education system.

In their advocacy role the voluntary organizations have played a particularly helpful and facilitative role in supplementing or making provision for children with special teaching needs. This has been particularly so at the pre-school level where education is not compulsory and where state provisions are not universal. It should be noted, however, that voluntary organizations are significantly deficit funded by the Government through its various ministries. Staff have been seconded to many of their programmes by the education service for some years.

While the voluntary organizations are adminstered through extremely well organized trust boards, management organizations or statutory authorities, all depend upon parental support. Parental influence is more obvious at branch and district level but there is a strong parental involvement in the overall functioning of voluntary organizations in New Zealand.

The Department of Education maintains particularly close liaison with all the voluntary agencies which contribute to the development of special education services. Members of the special education division of the Department serve on the boards of some organizations or act as observers or commentators for some other voluntary societies. The Department has informed all voluntary agencies that it will involve their membership, particularly parent delegates from their organizations, in all major policy discussions or conferences which might lead to policy recommendations.

Before major policies are finally determined, voluntary organizations are frequently asked their opinion or invited to comment upon draft papers. The voluntary organizations have direct access to the Minister of Education and make use of this form of communication from time to time. Most voluntary organizations invite the Department of Education to their annual conferences, where officers of the Department are frequently invited to speak.

SECTION VIII. PARENTS

Parents are not only involved in policy development through the voluntary organizations but are frequently invited to assist the department in a variety of ways as individuals. During 1986 the Department of Education specifically invited parent representatives from all the major voluntary organizations to join with its officers in discussions on collaboration between parents and the various levels and agencies of the Department. The purpose of this conference was to set in train the development of individual parent advocacy skills in preparation for closer parental co-operation in the development of individual educational programmes for students with special teaching needs.

In most, but not all cases, parents are invited to join psychologists, specialist advisers and teachers in assessment, programme development and programme evaluation discussions. The Department is encouraging an even greater involvement of parents in all these matters.

Parents are, of course, more involved in discussion and action concerning students of younger age groups. In early intervention programmes, sponsored by the Department of Education, and run in co-operation with other agencies with a contribution to make to early childhood development, parents are particularly involved as soon as a child's special needs are identified. The Department has recently made a number of appointments to the position of adviser on handicapped children to assist with these programmes. These advisers work with the Department of Education's psychologists and have a particular responsibility for parent guidance and for ensuring that programmes developed in co-operation with parents can be carried out in the child's own home.

In the last few years, parents have become particularly emphatic in their demand that children with moderate to profound handicaps receive equitable treatment within the education system. Many of these parents have become particularly knowledgeable, and new special interest groups have begun to emerge representing small groupings of parents who are urging the Department to decentralize their existing resources to smaller districts. There is an increasing demand from parents that children should not be required to leave home to attend residential special schools. This

demand has been met to some degree by the development of further regional and district resource provisions.

It is likely that parents will have a continuing and increasing influence on special education. The mood of the community is in favour of greater parental influence upon all elements of the education system. In many ways the role of parents in special education has been in advance of this general demand and special education services are well placed to provide an even better liaison and co-operative response to parents' involvement.

SECTION IX. ISSUES

Three goals have been set for special education over the next decade. The first of these seeks to ensure that the educational provisions of students with special teaching needs will be as normalizing as possible. The second is a process which ensures that parents, the community and the students themselves join with educators in determining the best way to assist any student. The third goal positively emphasizes individual assessment and programme development.

In the next decade the Department proposes to effect a gradual transition away from the allocation of resources by categories of handicap to a situation where educational assessment and the needs of the individual student are the primary focus of attention. This would require a shift of emphasis towards the allocation of resources to teaching programmes rather than categories. It would mean, for example, that teachers who are now restricted to working with only one category of student will be able to work with the most needy educationally handicapped students in a facility or group of facilities serviced by them.

It is proposed that over time, but as quickly as possible, all students will be included in the regular education stream except where this is clearly not in their best interest. Those who are presently educated in separate locations would take with them the resources they have. They and their teachers would form part of their new school's community and their educational planning would become the combined responsibility of the regular and special education teams.

Assistance from special education personnel to students and teachers in the mainstream is likely to be provided through support units based upon the well researched guidance unit approach. This model has proved to be both robust and flexible. It has allowed the Department to deliver special education support to a wide range of students. Some teachers of special classes for slow learning students have been able to adapt their work in this way, which to some extent has been reflected also in the work of the resource teachers of reading who assist students having difficulty in mastering key skills, and support their class teachers in developing appropriate programmes for them. This model permits special education to move quickly and easily from a categorial approach to a needs-based approach, and it has been shown to assist more students than a fixed classroom programme.

There is also a developing recognition of the need to assist principals and their teachers to identify and establish organizational processes and teaching programmes within their own schools which enable effective educational solutions to learning needs to be carried out.

It has been noted above that while there is agreement in principle with most of these emerging developments, the timetable for change, the understanding that some of the issues have to do with human rights and equity as much as with educational developments, and the demand from teacher organizations for additional resources before any new developments can take place are matters for continuing discussions. The tensions that naturally emerge when change of the nature envisaged cannot be as rapidly communicated to rank and file teaching staff as it can among academics, policy makers and representatives of national organizations cannot be taken lightly. There will be a major need for public education and professional information programmes if the changes noted in this case study are to be successfully carried through.

It will be particularly important to take note of the experience of other countries where such changes have been started. For example, the central element of in-service training for school management teams, principals, senior teaching staff and school administrators must be met. It will be important for support services to be in place at the time of change and to ensure that they are well prepared for their tasks. Leadership through the school inspectorate, the psychological service and the advisory

services will be an essential element in ensuring that new developments are successfully accomplished.

New Zealand is fortunate in that it has always practised mainstreaming and in many ways has established a unique position in the world. Partly for geographical reasons but also because many teachers and parents have believed that all students should be educated together, the majority of students needing additional assistance in our schools have been educated for all or most of their time with their age peers in regular primary and intermediate schools. While secondary schools have come more recently to this practice, they too have begun to provide the educational setting for most exceptional students.

It is important to stress that the Department of Education has accepted a definition of mainstreaming which involves a continuum of resources for students with special teaching needs. These range from complete inclusion in the regular classroom but with support to the student or the teacher from specialist staff. The continuum extends through the use of special classes or units where partial withdrawal permits the school to assist students who require specialist teaching part of the time but who can also take their place with their age peers in the regular classroom for some of the school day. Next, classes or units can be reserved for students who require more specialized teaching for most or all of the school day. In all these cases the students remain as part of the corporate life of the regular school and have the opportunity for social integration with their fellow students.

An important element of this approach to mainstreaming is that is places the educational planning for students with special teaching needs in the hands of the mainstream school. It permits the school's management team to include students with special teaching needs in the normal life of the school while providing specialist support to students and teachers where it is needed.

Finally, the Department includes in this mainstream approach the residential special schools for students who have a visual or hearing impairment, those who are maladjusted and students who are slow learning. It is accepted that in some cases, residential education should remain an option for some students in the foreseeable future. It is important that in moving to a more complete mainstream approach in special education, a

wide and flexible range of resources should be maintained which includes, for a very small proportion of students, this option of separate residential education, in which case some local schools assist the residential school by taking some students into their classes.

Mainstreaming is only a means to an end. It is certainly not an end in itself. In its attemps to ensure that every student with special teaching needs is offered the most effective education possible, within the most normalizing environment, the Department and the many people and organizations with whom it has consulted have agreed that mainstreaming offers the most rewarding and equitable approach.

No educational programme can succeed if it is not well supported by parents and teachers. Furthermore, teachers and students must have available to them the advisory and support services that ensure successful assessment, curriculum planning and learning opportunities. In its discussions with parent and teacher groups, the Department has found agreement that mainstreaming is the most appropriate way to assist students with special teaching needs. The challenge for us all is to ensure that the key people in this development are all ready to extend this unique New Zealand approach to remaining, segregated special education facilities.

APPENDIX I. ORGANIZATION OF SPECIAL EDUCATION IN NEW ZEALAND

APPENDIX II

This paper uses the accepted New Zealand nomenclature for persons to whom Unesco's term 'mentally retarded' might be applied. Mildly to moderately mentally retarded persons (in its terms) are described here as 'slow learners'; moderately to severely mentally retarded persons as 'intellectually handicapped' and profoundly mentally retarded persons as 'profoundly handicapped'. This particular usage recognizes that the persons concerned will all have more than one significant functional handicap if assessed in terms of the usual categories of handicap.